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[redacted] 25X1

IM 164/63
1 August 1963
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Geographic Division, ORR

25X1 ATTENTION: [redacted]

FROM: Chief, CIA/PID (NPIC)

SUBJECT: Yunnan-Tibet Highway

Declass Review by NGA.

REFERENCES: (a) Requirement ORR/50/63
(b) CIA/PID Project C 414-63

1. This memorandum is in response to the referenced requirement requesting:

a. The preparation of annotated maps noting the location, identification, and state or condition of the Yunnan-Tibet Highway. This is to include bridges, ferries, POL storage, tunnels, and repair facilities.

b. The location of electric power, industrial, military and mining facilities and the inclusion of photo enlargements of [illegible].

2. Per your request, all available [redacted] this area was utilized in this study. The mission [illegible] as follows:

25X1 [redacted]

There [illegible] low level photo cover[illegible] for the center section of the road. This [illegible] between 26-[illegible] and [illegible] which covers a distance of approximately [illegible] miles. A/S map series [illegible] was available for only the southern section of the highway; these maps are attached in a map [illegible] (CIA/PID/ID/P-270/63). Route location and available details are shown on World Aeronautical Charts (WAC) (CIA/PID/ID/P-271/63). Even though there is some repetition of roadway data as shown on CIA/PID/ID/P-270/63, the duplicate coverage is included for the sake of continuity. All measurements included in this memorandum are only approximate and should be treated accordingly.

3. The Yunnan-Tibet Highway is a complex system of good, graded, improved two lane roads which disintegrates into pack animal and caravan trails. This

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so called "Highway" could not now be used to supply logistical support to any sizable military operation into Tibet. At this time, it would be a lengthly and difficult task for a well equipped and well supplied convoy of jeeps to negotiate the trip from Hsia-Kuan (2[illegible] 100-12[illegible]) to Tibet. Northward from Chien-Chuan (26-22N 99-55E) it would be difficult to obtain gasoline, repair facilities, and spare parts, as well as to cross major rivers using a primitive ferrying facilities as well as to negotiate stretches of the unimproved road. The road passes through narrow river gorges and spans over steep mountainous terrain.

4. The following is a detailed description of the route together with other pertinent data which were extracted from photography. To facilitate ease of handling, the road is broken into three sections and each is described as follows:

ILLEGIB

[redacted]

a. The Yunnan-Tibet Highway proceeds up the east bank of the Yangtze River for approximately 20 miles, where a ferry is used to cross to the west bank. Northward the road follows up river valleys and over some relatively level terrain to Chung-tien (27-[illegible] 9[illegible]-[illegible]). Here it is an improved road bearing northwestward over relatively level terrain for approximately 40 miles, beyond which very heavy terrain is encountered to the limit of photo coverage at approximately 28-46N 100-01E.

c. The Yunnan-Tibet Highway proceeds northwestward from Chung-tien over level, then mountainous terrain before reaching the Yangtze River at 2[illegible]N 99-2[illegible]E. Just below Atuntzo (2[illegible]-07N 99-[illegible]E) the two lane graded road disintegrates into a single-lane unimproved road, sometimes little better than a pack animal or caravan trail. The Yangtze is crossed by means of a

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ferry, and the road then proceeds northward along the west bank of the river to Ien-Tsula. Northward, very heavy terrain is encountered for approximately 20 miles, where the road turns northward up river valleys and across high, level plateaus to Markham Dz (29-42N 98-32E). Northward and eastward from Markham Dz, improved roads fan out for approximately 10 miles, where they disintegrate into pack-animal or caravan trails. Westward from Markham Dz the Yunnan-Tibet Highway proceeds to the Mekong River, crosses the river by means of a ferry, then eastward and northward through Dodsa G (30-12N 97-25E) to Chando (30-12N 97-25E) where a junction is formed with the Szechuan-Tibet Road. Ferry crossings observed appeared to be designed for the transportation of personnel or pack-animals, rather than for any heavy vehicular traffic.

5. Except for the Mekong and the Yangtse Rivers, all other rivers and streams encountered by the improved roads were bridged. The improved road surface varied considerably from a maximum width of 30 feet between Hsia-Kuan and Ta-li to approximately [redacted] feet in width in the mountainous areas north of Chien Hu (Lake). The width of the unimproved roads was generally not possible to determine; however, it appeared to be quite narrow, probably passible for light vehicles or jeeps in mountainous terrain, or in the deep river gorges, where no off-road movement is possible. The surface of the improved roads is graded and is probably reinforced with broken stone or gravel. All bridges observed appeared to be constructed of masonery or concrete and were capable of supporting heavy loads. 25X1

6. Information concerning bridges observed along the Yunnan-Tibet Highway is as follows:

Bridge No. 1
Deck-arch
Concrete piers and abutments
Six spans
[redacted] 25X1

Photo CIA/RD/ID-P-279 shows bridges 1 and 1a

Bridge No. 1a
Deck-arch
Concrete piers and abutments
Five spans
[redacted] 25X1

Bridge No. 2
Deck-arch
Masonery piers and abutments
Four spans
[redacted] 25X1

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Photo CIA/PIB/IR-P-276 shows bridges 2 and 3

Bridge No. 3.
Deck-arch
Masonery piers and abutments
Five spans
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 4
Deck-type
Estimated four spans
25X1 [redacted]

Photo CIA/PIB/IR-P-277 shows bridges 3, 4, 5, and 6

Bridge No. 5
Deck-type
estimated four spans

Bridge No. 6
Deck-type
Estimated four spans
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 7
Deck-type
Estimated four spans
25X1 [redacted]

CIA/PIB/IR-P-280 shows bridges 7, 7a, [illegible], 8, 9, 9a, 10, and 11

Bridge No. 7a
Deck-arch
Masonry piers and abutments
Estimated six spans
240' long

Bridge No. [illegible]
Deck-type
Estimated three spans
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 8a
Deck-arch
Masonery piers and abutments
Estimated four spans
60' long

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Bridge No. 9
Deck-type
Estimated four spans
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 9a
Deck-type
Estimated four spans
100' long

Bridge No. 10
Deck-type
Estimated four spans
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 11
Deck-type
Two spans
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 12
Deck-arch
Masonery piers and abutments
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 13
Deck-type
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 14
Deck-type
25X1 [redacted]

Bridge No. 15
Deck-type
Estimated two spans

Bridge No. 16
Deck-type
Five spans

Bridge No. 17
Deck-type

Bridge No. 18
Deck-type
Estimated three spans

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Bridge No. 19
Deck-type
Estimated six spans
110' long

Bridge No. 20
Deck-type
Estimated five spans
150' long

7. The photo analyst on this project is [redacted] who may be contacted on extension [redacted] should you have any further questions regarding this project. 25X1 25X1

8. This project is considered to be complete.

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Enclosures:
1 - Two (2) annotated maps
(CIA/PID/ID-P-270/63 and
CIA/PID/ID-P-271/63)
2 - Annotated photos
(CIA/PID/ID-P-172 thru 270/63)

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